



ABC Devotions

(Follow the Alphabet for your individual or family devotion.)

The Nativity of our Lord

For the Week of December 25, 2016 through December 31, 2016

A. Make the sign of the cross in remembrance of your baptism and say: **In the name of the Father and of the ☩ Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.**

B. Confess the Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth.

And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried. He descended into hell. The third day He rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life ☩ everlasting. Amen.

C. Pray the Lord's Prayer

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.

D. Pray the Prayer Appropriate for Time of Day

Morning

I thank You, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Your dear Son, that You have kept me this night from all harm and danger; and I pray that You would keep me this day also from sin and every evil, that all my doings and life may please You. For into Your hands I commend myself, my body and soul, and all things. Let Your holy angel be with me, that the evil foe may have no power over me. Amen.

Evening

I thank you, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Your dear Son, that you have graciously kept me this day; and I pray that you would forgive me all my sins where I have done wrong, and graciously keep me this night. For into Your hands I commend myself, my body and soul, and all things. Let Your holy angel be with me, that the evil foe may have no power over me. Amen.

E. Daily Bible Reading

Sunday (Nativity of our Lord): John 1:1-18 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. [2] He was in the beginning with God. [3] All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. [4] In him was life, and the life was the light of men. [5] The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. [6] There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. [7] He came as a witness, to bear witness about the light, that all might believe through him. [8] He was not the light, but came to bear witness about the light. [9] The true light, which gives light to everyone, was coming into the world. [10] He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him. [11] He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. [12] But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, [13] who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God. [14] And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth. [15] (John bore witness about him, and cried out, “This was he of whom I said, ‘He who comes after me ranks before me, because he was before me.’”) [16] For from his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. [17] For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. [18] No one has ever seen God; the only God, who is at the Father's side, he has made him known.

Monday (St. Stephen, Martyr): Acts 6:8-7:2a, 51-50 And Stephen, full of grace and power, was doing great wonders and signs among the people. [9] Then some of those who belonged to the synagogue of the Freedmen (as it was called), and of the Cyrenians, and of the Alexandrians, and of those from Cilicia and Asia, rose up and disputed with Stephen. [10] But they could not withstand the wisdom and the Spirit with which he was speaking. [11] Then they secretly instigated men who said, “We have heard him speak blasphemous words against Moses and God.” [12] And they stirred up the people and the elders and the scribes, and they came upon him and seized him and brought him before the council, [13] and they set up false witnesses who said, “This man never ceases to speak words against this holy place and the law, [14] for we have heard him say that this Jesus of Nazareth will destroy this place and will change the customs that Moses delivered to us.” [15] And gazing at him, all who sat in the council saw that his face was like the face of an angel. [7:1] And the high priest said, “Are these things so?” [2] And Stephen said:“Brothers and fathers, hear me. The God of glory appeared to our father Abraham when he was in Mesopotamia, before he lived in Haran, [51] “You stiff-necked people, uncircumcised in heart and ears, you always resist the Holy Spirit. As your fathers did, so do you. [52] Which of the prophets did your fathers not persecute? And they killed those who announced beforehand the coming of the Righteous One, whom you have now betrayed and murdered, [53] you who received the law as delivered by angels and did not keep it.” [54] Now when they heard these things they were enraged, and they ground their teeth at him. [55] But he, full of the Holy Spirit, gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. [56] And he said, “Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God.” [57] But they cried out with a loud voice and stopped their ears and rushed together at him. [58] Then they cast him out of the city and stoned him. And the witnesses laid down their garments at the feet of a young man named Saul. [59] And as they were stoning Stephen, he called out, “Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.” [60] And falling to his knees he cried out with a loud voice, “Lord, do not hold this sin against them.” And when he had said this, he fell asleep.

Tuesday (St. John, Apostle and Evangelist): John 21:20-25 Peter turned and saw the disciple whom Jesus loved following them, the one who also had leaned back against him during the supper and had said, “Lord, who is it that is going to betray you?” [21] When Peter saw him, he said to Jesus, “Lord, what about this man?” [22] Jesus said to him, “If it is my will that he remain until I come, what is that to you? You follow me!” [23] So the saying spread abroad among the brothers that this disciple was not to die; yet Jesus did not say to him that he was not to die, but, “If it is my will that he remain until I come, what is that to you?” [24] This is the disciple who is bearing witness about these things, and who has written these things, and we know that his testimony is true. [25] Now there are also many other things that Jesus did. Were every one of them to be writ-

ten, I suppose that the world itself could not contain the books that would be written .

Wednesday (Holy Innocents): Matthew 2:13-18 Now when they had departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, “Rise, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you, for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him.” [14] And he rose and took the child and his mother by night and departed to Egypt [15] and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet, “Out of Egypt I called my son.” [16] Then Herod, when he saw that he had been tricked by the wise men, became furious, and he sent and killed all the male children in Bethlehem and in all that region who were two years old or under, according to the time that he had ascertained from the wise men. [17] Then was fulfilled what was spoken by the prophet Jeremiah: [18] “A voice was heard in Ramah, weeping and loud lamentation, Rachel weeping for her children; she refused to be comforted, because they are no more.”

Thursday: Isaiah 9:2-7 The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shone. [3] You have multiplied the nation; you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as they are glad when they divide the spoil. [4] For the yoke of his burden, and the staff for his shoulder, the rod of his oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian. [5] For every boot of the tramping warrior in battle tumult and every garment rolled in blood will be burned as fuel for the fire. [6] For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. [7] Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

Friday: Titus 3:4-7 But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, 5he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, 6whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, 7so that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

Saturday: Isaiah 52:7-10 How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him who brings good news, who publishes peace, who brings good news of happiness, who publishes salvation, who says to Zion, "Your God reigns." 8The voice of your watchmen—they lift up their voice; together they sing for joy; for eye to eye they see the return of the Lord to Zion. 9Break forth together into singing, you waste places of Jerusalem, for the Lord has comforted his people; he has redeemed Jerusalem. 10The Lord has bared his holy arm before the eyes of all the nations, and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God.

F. Catechism Reading for the Week

The Lord's Prayer: The Sixth Petition

And lead us not into temptation.

What does this mean? God tempts no one. We pray in this petition that God would guard and keep us so that the devil, the world, and our sinful nature may not deceive us or mislead us into false belief, despair, and other great shame and vice. Although we are attacked by these things, we pray that we may finally overcome them and win the victory s.

G. Verse for the Week:

Galatians 4:4-5 But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, [5] to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons.

H. Pray the Prayer for the Week

Collect for the Nativity of our Lord:

Almighty God, grant that the birth of Your only-begotten Son in the flesh may set us free from the bondage of sin; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

I. Pray for Others and Ourselves *(See below for daily themes.)*

Daily Themes for Prayer

Sunday: *Pray for the joy of the resurrection among us; for the fruit of faith nourished by the Word and Sacraments.*

Monday: *Pray for faith to live in the promises of Holy Baptism; for one's calling and daily work; for the unemployed; for the salvation and well-being of our neighbors; for schools, colleges, and seminaries; for good government and for peace.*

Tuesday: *Pray for deliverance against temptation and evil; for the addicted and despairing, the tortured and oppressed; for those struggling with besetting sins.*

Wednesday: *Pray for marriage and family, that husbands and wives, parents and children live in ordered harmony according to the Word of God; for parents who must raise children alone; for our communities and neighborhoods.*

Thursday: *Pray for the Church and her pastors; for teachers, deacons, deaconesses, and other church workers; for missionaries and for all who serve the Church; for fruitful and salutary use of the blessed sacrament of Christ's body and blood.*

Friday: *Pray for the preaching of the holy cross of our Lord Jesus Christ and for the spread of His knowledge throughout the whole world; for the persecuted and oppressed; for the sick and dying.*

Saturday: *Pray for faithfulness to the end; for the renewal of those who are withering in the faith or have fallen away; for receptive hearts and minds to God's Word on the Lord's Day; for pastors and people as they prepare to administer and receive Christ's holy gifts.*

J. Sing or Say the Hymn of the Week

"Of the Father's Love Begotten"

LSB #384

1 Of the Father's love begotten Ere the worlds began to be,
He is Alpha and Omega, He the source, the ending He,
Of the things that are, that have been, And that future years shall see Evermore and evermore.

2 Oh, that birth forever blessed, When the virgin full of grace,
By the Holy Ghost conceiving, Bore the Savior of our race,
And the babe, the world's Redeemer, First revealed His sacred face Evermore and evermore.

3 This is He whom seers in old time Chanted of with one accord,
Whom the voices of the prophets Promised in their faithful word.
Now He shines, the long-expected; Let creation praise its Lord Evermore and evermore.

4 O ye heights of heav'n adore Him; Angel hosts, His praises sing,
Pow'rs, dominions, bow before Him And extol our God and King.
Let no tongue on earth be silent, Ev'ry voice in concert ring Evermore and evermore.

5 Christ, to Thee, with God the Father, And, O Holy Ghost, to Thee
Hymn and chant and high thanksgiving And unending praises be,
Honor, glory, and dominion, And eternal victory Evermore and evermore. Amen